

December 10, 2014

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WASHINGTON TEACHER PREPARATION IS NOT ALIGNED WITH COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READINESS STANDARDS

Washington's teacher preparation policies fail to ensure that new teachers are ready to help students achieve to the high levels necessary for college and careers.

December 10, 2014 (Washington, DC) — The National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) today released its eighth annual *State Teacher Policy Yearbook*. This year's edition focuses on Washington's efforts to align its requirements for teacher preparation and licensure with the skills needed to prepare students for college and careers.

NCTQ Vice President and Managing Director for State Policy Sandi Jacobs said, "With such a profound change occurring in K-12 student standards across the country, it would stand to reason that parallel changes would occur on the teacher side. Washington needs to ensure that teachers are adequately supported in the transition and beyond. And there is no better place to start than where new teachers begin to learn their craft—in teacher preparation programs."

Key Yearbook Findings:

Washington's teacher preparation requirements are not explicit enough to prepare teachers for college- and career-readiness standards.

- Unlike most states, Washington's standards for new teachers at least mention some of the instructional shifts associated with college- and career-readiness standards. However, requirements for new teachers do not sufficiently articulate components such as using informational texts and incorporating literacy skills in all subjects.

State content knowledge requirements for prospective teachers in Washington aren't ambitious enough to meet the demands of college- and career-readiness standards.

- Washington does not require elementary teaching candidates to pass a content test that provides separate scores for all core subject areas, making it difficult to ensure elementary teachers have mastered all of the content they are licensed to teach.
- Washington does not ensure that prospective teachers demonstrate their knowledge of the science of reading.
- Washington is one of 14 states that issues a K-8 teaching license, which fails to differentiate between the preparation of elementary teachers and middle school teachers.
- Washington is one of just 8 states in the nation that does not require secondary teachers to pass a content test in every licensed subject area.

The preparation needs of special education teachers continues to be a largely neglected area, with the introduction of more challenging academic standards in Washington having little to no impact on requirements for teachers who educate special education students.

- Washington is one of 34 states in the nation that still offers or exclusively grants K-12 special education teacher licenses. In addition, Washington does not require special education teachers to demonstrate subject matter knowledge as a condition of licensure.

Washington's teacher preparation admissions requirements are not selective.

- With no minimum GPA and a test of academic proficiency that is not normed to the college-bound population (such as the ACT or SAT) required for admission to teacher prep programs, Washington sets a relatively low bar for the academic performance of the state's prospective teachers.

Washington neither collects meaningful data about the quality of teacher prep programs nor holds programs accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.

- Washington is one of 41 states that does not connect student achievement data to teacher preparation programs.
- Washington does not set explicit minimum performance standards for teacher preparation programs in the state.

Looking at NCTQ's traditional *Yearbook* metrics, Washington earns an overall grade of D+ for teacher preparation.

- The average grade for all states for teacher preparation in 2014 is a C, up from a D in 2011.

The *Washington State Teacher Policy Yearbook* is immediately available for free download at: www.nctq.org/statepolicy. The redesigned website also provides searchable access to the entire *Yearbook* dataset, including topical pages with up-to-date data on state teacher policy, a customized search tool and user-friendly options for generating graphic results that can be exported and shared.

The *State Teacher Policy Yearbook* was funded by private foundations across the United States, including the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Carnegie Corporation of New York, Gleason Family Foundation, J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation, the Joyce Foundation and the Walton Family Foundation. NCTQ accepts no funding from the federal government. The National Council of Teacher Quality – comprised of reform-minded Democrats, Republicans, and Independents – is a non-partisan research and policy group committed to restructuring the teaching profession based on the belief that all children deserve effective teachers. More information about NCTQ, including a list of the Board of Directors and Advisory Board, can be found on the NCTQ website, www.nctq.org.